

II. Remarks:

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application is respectfully requested.

A telephone conference between Examiner Nguyen and Applicants' attorney, James Gromada, was held on November 8, 2006. During this telephone conference, certain features of the present invention, including features relating to the proposed claim amendments included in this response, were discussed with respect to the cited references of record. Applicants would like to thank Examiner Nguyen for her assistance during this telephone conference.

Claims 1-35, 39-52, 54-56, and 59-64 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 17, 32, 33, and 35 are independent. Claims 36-38, 53, and 57-58 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 2, 17-33, and 35 have been amended to clarify the scope of the claims with respect to the specification and the drawings. New dependent Claims 61-64 have been added. No new matter has been added.

Each of Claims 17-31 has been amended to clarify that these claims are directed to a computer-readable medium encoded with a software structure. No new matter has been added.

The pending claims were rejected as being unpatentable over WO 00/41406 (Willehadson), U.S. Patent No. 6,577,726 to Huang, et al., and/or U.S. Patent No. 4,277,649 to Sheinbein, for the reasons discussed on pages 2-6 of the Office Action. The Applicants expressly traverse all art rejections.

Each of the independent claims recites a novel combination of structure and function whereby each terminal agent is associated, on a one-to-one basis, with a

corresponding terminal. See, for example the embodiment depicted in Fig. 1 and described in the specification at page 7, the first full paragraph. Each of independent Claims 1, 2, 17, 32, 33, and 35 has been amended to recite that the terminal agents are software terminal agents. Support for these amendments may be found, for example, at page 5, line 15 through page 6, line 3; page 9, line 22 through page 10, line 4; and page 18, line 30, through page 19, line 2.

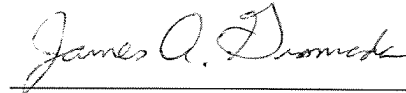
In contrast, none of the cited art (including Willehadson, Huang, et al., and Sheinbein) whether taken individually or in combination, discloses or suggests the claimed combination of features, including those discussed above. In particular, at page 3 of the Office Action, it is admitted that “Willehadson does not explicitly suggest that each terminal is associated, on a one-to-one basis, with a corresponding terminal agent.” The Office Action then states that “Huang, et al. teaches each terminal . . . is associated, on a one-to-one basis, with a corresponding terminal agent”. However, the terminal agents of Huang, et al. are teletypes that are attended to by humans, such as employees; there is no disclosure in Huang that suggests the use of software terminal agents, as recited in each of the independent claims as amended.

Accordingly, the salient claimed features of the present invention are nowhere disclosed or suggested by the cited art.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3500. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "James A. Gromada", positioned above a horizontal line.

James A. Gromada
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 44,727

KATTEN MUCHIN ROSENMAN L.L.P.
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
East Lobby, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20007-5201
Facsimile: (202) 298-7570